

Oneshot: And Once More

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Summary: No two people can be assigned to the same class, the same neighbouring seats, for three years in a row and not meant to be together. Noriko returns from her holiday with a present to give and some reservations to overcome. Daichi/OC

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****Enjoy!****

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><p>And Once More**

Noriko walked hesitant steps with unsteady resolve. If she were to make it there, to the gym across the path, she would need to do better. Better was what he deserved, but it came with a decision and with decisions, consequences.

The sky was surprisingly cloudless that day. Though the sun hung high, persistent despite the growing lateness of the afternoon, Noriko wore a jumper over her school uniform. If anything, the shortness of her skirt made up for the skin her school jumper covered. She was partial to the idea balance, mostly because it appealed to her tastes.

Noriko liked what was easy and simple. The plainer, the better â€" the mantra was obvious after one looked at her. Though she had the soft jaw and gentle, brown eyes of a promisingly pretty face, her uniform was as standard as possible and her hair just the same. To those who took the time, they could see the choppy remains of a fringe that insisted on framing her face.

She couldn't forget her goal. The gym was before her, and the resolve in her pocket. Noriko swallowed her nerves and got on with it. Though the school year had begun a little while ago, she had yet to find the proper time to speak to Daichi Sawamura.

He was always busy, mostly with his duties to the volleyball club, and she had been equally pressed by family responsibilities. Though via text, call and email they had kept in contact over the holidays, it was hard given Noriko's trip to Europe. The continent was beautiful, but the holiday had been filled with slight guilt for missing Daichi's birthday " she wasn't that good at being his girlfriend.

She stepped inside the gym, careful not to let the door hit her from behind.

"Umâ€|?"

Not surprisingly enough, it was Tanaka who spotted her first. While he jumped at the sight, shrieking in what was probably fear, she smiled cheerfully.

"Noriko!" exclaimed Koushi Sugawara, stepping towards her with a welcoming smile.

"Hey, Sugawara." She greeted, cheeks dimpling unevenly.

Tanaka interrupted the pair, pointing an accusing finger at her. "What are you doing in here?!"

"Am I'm not allowed?" she countered, "Because I thought it was the captain who had power over who stays and goes. Perhaps I should bring it up with him."

"N-n-n-n-_no, wait!_"

"Oh, _Captain!_"

Daichi, the oblivious captain, was standing in a small, five-person circle as they tossed a volleyball around. Noriko didn't hesitate this time, skipping towards him cheerfully. At the word, the sound of her voice, he froze as the ball came towards him. Too late to hit it on properly, Daichi batted it to the side where it slammed into the face of one of his teammates.

He ignored it, more intent upon something else. "Noriko!"

The two skipped towards each other, apathetic to everything else. They were the subject of all attention, though it was mostly on Noriko. Her smile, the one she sent Daichi, did strange things to the stomach.

"Dai-kun!" she enthused.

He laughed, catching her midstride. The momentum of her jump kept them spinning, grinning like love-struck fools " something neither could really deny. It had been fated, and the entire school agreed. No one was randomly seated next to the same person for three consecutive years in a row purely by chance.

After Daichi set her on the ground he asked the very same thing as Tanaka, "What are you doing here?"

"Visiting you." She replied obviously.

"Why does it only matter if I ask that?!" Tanaka shouted out to them.

In the distance a voice murmured, in reference to Noriko, "Who's that?"

Before she could think to address the boy, who was probably a first year, the opportunity was taken from her hands.

With a conspiring expression, in a voice he considered a whisper but no one else would, Tanaka declared, "She's a witch."

As her shyness only existed towards Daichi, Noriko had no problem replying. She bounded right over to Tanaka, who stood beside an orange-haired first year, and flashed him her most brilliant smile. It was so sweet it sent shivers down in his spine.

"What did you just call me, Tanaka?"

"Yeah," Daichi agreed, "What did you just call my girlfriend, Tanaka?"_

He, though not of remarkable height, wore an expression that turned him into a giant. As Daichi loomed over Noriko's shoulder, Tanaka slipped behind the safety of the first year's back.

"Nothing! You misheard â€" I clearly said nice, friendly, and wonderful!" Tanaka lied shamelessly.

"And beautiful."

Noriko felt her cheeks flush at the words whispered in her ear. "I wanted to talk to you." She reminded Daichi quickly, hoping it would distract him.

She chose to ignore the first year, staring at her perplexedly and muttering, "Girlfriend, girlfriend,"_ under his breath.

Seemingly, it worked. He smiled widely and slung his arm around her shoulder. "Anytime," he assured her, guiding them out of the gym quickly and only remembering his team at the last moment, "Sugawara, you're in charge!"

"Okay, captain."

Noriko just barely caught the reply, ushered out of the gym almost as quickly as she had come. She remained under the weight of Daichi's arm for a minute longer, as he seemed to have no intention of moving away. Once the door had shut behind them, she stepped away to face him.

"Sorry." She murmured.

"For what?"

"Interrupting your practise, and also missing your birthday, and not getting a chance to give your present to you sooner."

Daichi laughed at that. "Don't worry about it. You've only been back for a few days and we've both been busy. How was the trip anyway?"

"Good," Noriko replied, "We should go there together one day."

"Just the two of us? _Alone?_" he wondered, half-teasingly.

"Shameless." She muttered, not with any real conviction, before patting his shoulders, "But don't worry, Dai-kun, there's nothing to apologise for!"

"â€|I didn't say anything?"

"But you _thought_ it."

A noticeable shock rent down his body. Noriko knew him almost too well, if it were possible. "Anywayâ€|" Daichi said, hoping to get the conversation back on track and away from any indecent thoughts he may or may not have had.

"Oh, yeah." Noriko shoved her hand into her pocket, rummaging about for whatever she had to give him. "Hold out your hands for a second." She ordered.

Daichi did so, only to find himself used as a table. First to be pulled from her pocket was a phone. A collection of randomly assorted items followed; bobby pins, house keys, loose change, and for some reason, she also had a stick of chalk.

"The uniform pockets are much bigger than normal ones." Noriko noted in passing explanation.

"I can see."

"I think it's helpful- oh, I found it."

Noriko beamed as she took the box from her pocket and presented it to Daichi. He spent a second glancing between her, the gift, and the pile of things in his hands before she finally understood. Noriko pulled an apologetic expression before sliding the lid off the box herself. Inside, Daichi noted a woven bracelet of mostly blue and black.

"I got it in Germany. It matches one that I have, sort of like friendship bracelets. Except I don't want it mean that we're friendsâ€|"

While he certainly appreciated it, it wasn't long before Daichi was staring at Noriko instead. Her eyes, a light, honey-brown, were warm with the smile her mouth drew. While the wind toyed with her hair, tangling it further, he realised that she could have had different hair or freckles or piercings and tattoos and it wouldn't matter â€" so long as she kept that smile.

"I love you."

It took only a moment, only those words, for her to come undone.

Her body acted of its own volition. She didn't register the phone in his hands, simply slapped it away in a hasty attempt to hug Daichi. He, as he always would, caught her before Noriko could push them both over to the ground. When they teetered, Noriko pressed herself closer. He was too surprised to react just yet.

"Thank you." Her reply was muffled, spoken to his shirt more than anything.

Not able to find his voice, Daichi settled for returning her hug. One hand patted her head as if in comfort, though maybe it was more for his own sake. Her reply-

Noriko took a step back. "I love you too."

He let out a sigh, a breathy relief the eased into his posture.

"You weren't worried about that, were you?" she guessed.

"A little."

"Really?" Noriko laughed at the absurdity of the idea. "Could you help me pick up my things? I got a bit carried away."

As she bent down to collect the assortment of things she pocketed, Daichi crouched opposite her. "That's what I love about you." He admitted, placing a bobby pin in her hand.

"Just that one specific part?"

"Not just. Everything."

Noriko blushed scarlet. "That's unrealistic." She murmured, trying to be modest but failing "everyone loved being complimented."

"Everything." Daichi confirmed.

They stood in synchronized unison. Noriko shoved her collection of items back into her pocket, including the phone and chalk, before holding out her hand. Daichi also extended his, unsure why until she grabbed his wrist. The bracelet she had brought him settled over his skin, her fingers nimbly knotting it around. He noticed that identical band on her own wrist, previously hidden under her sleeve.

"Happy birthday." She told him, before balancing on her toes to kiss his cheek.

Following that, Daichi took a step closer. "You missed." He said tackily.

Noriko went to shake her head exasperatedly, but was caught. His hands steadied her shoulders, eyes shut tight so that he couldn't see he had walked her into the wooden fence. They were both far too invested in the kiss to mind anything else.

Noriko hoped he wouldn't notice that her fingers, pressed against the nape of his neck, were shaking with nerves. She doubted her ability to kiss well, though Daichi would often sigh as if it were enough for him.

"Daichi," Noriko interrupted them to continue talking, "The rest of your present is an I-owe-you."

"Meaning?"

"Meaning that when you want, we should go out. Doesn't matter if it's for tea or for the day, but it'll be my treat."

"You're spoiling me, Noriko. You don't have to do that." He argued reprovingly.

"But I want to."

Whether unintentional or not, Noriko twisted her hips against his. Daichi blushed lightly, before swallowing his hesitancy.

"Let's compromise." He suggested.

"How?"

"Instead of going out, you can just come over to my house. I don't need you to spend any money on me, you know."

Her lips curved into a pout. "But it's not as special that way."

"It will be," he confessed, "If you're with me."

Noriko's head fell onto his shoulder, hiding her embarrassment from sight. "You're sweet." She muttered almost inaudibly.

"And you're cute." Daichi replied, hoping his voice was as steady as his resolve.

She giggled, proving his point. "If you say so. I accept your compromise."

He nodded resolutely. When his hands travelled a little lower down her back, Noriko lifted her head to meet him for the ensuing kiss. Like before, it lasted longer than the attempted few seconds. She was partly to blame, securing a hold with his short, dark hair. Thoughts wandered rampant, free to consider how guilty he should feel. While they were both wondering how long it had been since he left his team alone, Daichi was also becoming concerned with the shortness of her skirt.

"_Captain!_"

The couple separated immediately.

"_Tanaka_, you _pervert!_" Noriko was quickest to respond.

The borderline-bald man grimaced at the insinuation. "Maybe you wouldn't think so if you didn't keep flaunting it in front of everyone!"

"We were alone a moment ago!"

Not that Tanaka was right anyway. Before they had begun dating, Daichi had been pointing to the dirt on her face in the middle of class "the teacher subsequently calling them out for it and ordering them together for the latest class project " but that was as far as they went with most public displays of affection. A hug, a compliment, and somehow the entire school had begun agreeing that 'even God wanted them to be together'.

"Just because I don't have a girlfriend." Tanaka cried, sulking theatrically.

Daichi let his hand fall on Noriko's shoulder. "Ah, so he's jealous. I didn't realise we were the poster children for a perfect high school relationship."

"Even my dad likes you," Noriko pointed out, "So that's saying something. I'd be jealous if someone else were dating you too."

She cast an innocent smile at Tanaka, who fumed with indignation.

"I-I-I'm not- Didn't mean-" he spluttered.

As if in all seriousness, Daichi stepped sideways to bow deeply in his team member's direction. "I'm sorry, but I respectfully decline your feelings." He declared, "Riko-chan is my one and only."

"C-c-c-c-captain!_"

A snort of unrestrainable laughter escaped Noriko. Tanaka shot her an anxious glare, failing at his usual intimidation tactics. It was an expression that only made her laugh all the harder.

"I just had to tell you to hurry up!" exclaimed Tanaka, stepping back inside with a red face and hasty slam of the door.

Noriko's giggling proved infectious, as when Daichi stood and faced her, he wore the biggest grin. His shoulders shook with amusement, though she could hardly see through the haze of tears.

"I'm not trying to be mean," she assured, "But he's really easy to tease."

"Don't worry about it. Tanaka can handle it." Daichi told her.

"Ah," she breathed in and out, counting to ten. Her heart slowed just a little, just enough for her to manage, "You should be getting back, though."

"I should," he agreed, despite not moving.

Noriko felt a question stick to her lips. "What?"

"Well, before I go, how about just one more kiss?"

Daichi always asked that. He had asked that every day since they had

started going out.

Noriko pressed her lips against his, soft and yielding; promising.
"Satisfied?"

His answer would always be the same, always spoken with that familiar smile. "I still want another one."

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><p>Apologies for anything out of character and please feel free to over advicecritiques.**

Thanks for reading :)

End
file.